

## **4.0 Public Process**

The US-91 North Corridor Plan was developed in consultation with a wide spectrum of public interests and roadway users. The purpose of this consultation was to identify project area issues and transportation needs, and to obtain input on alternative ways to address these. The process was organized and scheduled to correspond with important milestone decisions in the corridor planning process.

### **4.1 Stakeholder Interviews**

The Project Team conducted interviews with 28 entities at the beginning of the corridor planning process. These interviews provided opportunities to familiarize stakeholders with the corridor planning process, obtain their issues with and suggestions for US-91, and to identify any other stakeholders that should be involved. Stakeholders were identified from contact information obtained from the Idaho Transportation Department, internet research and recommendations of other project participants. They included representatives from local governments, school districts, agribusiness and other business entities. The following organizations were interviewed during the week of November 29, 2004 and December 6, 2004.

#### Local Governments:

- Bannock County
- City of Chubbuck
- City of Shelley
- City of Firth
- Bonneville Municipal Planning Organization
- City of Blackfoot Building/Zoning
- Bonneville County Planning and Zoning
- Bingham County Planning and Zoning

#### School Districts:

- Pocatello/Chubbuck School District
- Blackfoot School District #55
- Idaho Falls School District #91
- Shelley School District
- Bonneville Joint School District

#### Agribusiness and Business:

- U.S. Postal Service
- Howard Equipment
- Blackfoot Chamber of Commerce
- Potato Growers of Idaho
- Idaho Growers and Shippers Association
- Geneval Potato and Onion Division
- Basic American Foods
- Howard Taylor & Sons
- Idaho Supreme Potatoes
- Melaleuca Inc.
- Eastern Idaho State Fairgrounds
- Doug Andrus Distributing
- Killpack Trucking
- HK Contractors
- Wadda Farms

The interviews were conducted using the following questions as a guide to initiating discussion. Discussion was not restricted to the topics represented below:

1. How would you describe your use of US Highway 91? (activities, vehicle types, time of day).
2. What problems/issues have you experienced with the current Highway?
3. What highways improvements do you think are needed and where?
4. How would you like to be involved in the planning process?
5. Who might also be interested in the US 91 corridor planning process?

The concerns and issues expressed by these 28 individuals were considered in the development, screening and refinement of US-91 project alternatives and in the identification of specific highway improvement projects.

## **4.2 Tribal Consultation**

US-91 passes through and provides access to the Fort Hall Reservation, home of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. The Tribes are a sovereign nation and have jurisdiction over the lands adjacent to US-91 through the reservation. ITD has been coordinating with the Tribes for many years on transportation related issues. Previous coordination has resulted in the approval and funding for improvements to Reservation Road and US-91 and approval for improvements to US-91 and Agency Road through the Fort Hall townsite.

This tribal consultation and coordination were continued through the US-91 North Corridor Planning process to identify any additional needs or concerns. An introductory letter was sent by ITD to the Tribal Chairperson. As part of a series of issue identification meetings, an open house was held on March 30, 2005 in the Tribal Business Center to obtain input from members of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. A representative from the Tribes participated in the January 2006 special meeting of the Bingham County Transportation Coalition. Additional coordination occurred at a May 10, 2006 meeting with Tribes Transportation Director.

## **4.3 Public Open Houses**

A series of initial public open houses was held to identify US-91 and obtain suggestions for improvements. Meetings were held February 15, 2005 at the Shelley High School, February 16, 2005 at the Blackfoot City Hall, and February 17, 2005 at the Chubbuck City Hall.

As part of the development of a concept for the New Sweden Road to York Road project, a meeting with landowners adjacent to this segment of US-91 was held in June 21, 2005 at the Shelley City Council Chambers.

Proposed improvements to US-91 were available for comment at an August 24, 2006 public open house at the Blackfoot City Council Chambers.

## **4.4 Technical Advisory Committee**

ITD has consistently found that project planning and design have benefited from the technical expertise and local knowledge of county and city planners, engineers, public works staff, and other technical personnel. Continued local involvement in the development of this corridor plan was facilitated by the formation of a US-91 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The purpose of this committee is to share technical information about the US-91 north corridor, discuss existing and future transportation issues, and help develop and evaluate solutions. Table 4-1 lists the organizations invited to participate on the TAC.

**Table 4-1: Technical Advisory Committee Membership**

Type of Organization	Jurisdictions Invited
Sovereign Nation	Shoshone-Bannock Tribes
Counties	Bannock, Bingham and Bonneville Counties
Cities	Pocatello, Chubbuck, Blackfoot, Firth, Basalt, Shelley, Idaho Falls
Regional Planning Organizations	Bannock Planning Association, Bonneville Metropolitan Planning Association, Southeast Idaho Council of Governments
School Districts	Pocatello/Chubbuck #25, Blackfoot #55, Bonneville Joint #93, Shelley, Idaho Falls #91
Non-Governmental Organizations	Union Pacific Railroad, Bingham Economic Development Corporation
Resource Agencies	Federal Highway Administration, USDA Forest Services, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Idaho Division of Environmental Quality, Idaho Fish & Game

The TAC met on February 17, 2005. Members of the TAC were also invited to attend the January 2006 meeting of the Bingham County Transportation Coalition and the public open house on August 24, 2006 at the Blackfoot City Hall to consider proposed improvements to US-91.

## 4.5 Task Force

Project planning and design of transportation infrastructure have benefited from the input from elected officials and planning commissioners and has facilitated coordination between local transportation plans, needs and expectations and ITD planning and projects. A US-91 Task Force was organized to share information and help evaluate any proposed US-91 improvements. The Task Force was composed of a representative from the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, County Commissioners from Bannock County, Bingham County and Bonneville County as well as the Mayors of the Cities of Pocatello, Chubbuck, Blackfoot, Firth, Basalt, and Idaho Falls. Arising from stakeholder interviews, the Idaho Grower Shippers Association, Wadda Farms, and the Blackfoot Chamber of Commerce were also members of the Task Force.

The TAC met on February 16, 2005 and were invited to attend the January 2006 meeting of the Bingham County Transportation Coalition and the August 24, 2006 public open house at the Blackfoot City Hall to consider proposed improvements to US-91.